

By: West

S.B. No. 1800

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the provision of child care.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. (a) The Health and Human Services Commission shall work with the Texas Workforce Commission and local workforce development boards to increase the availability and accessibility of quality child care in this state. The Health and Human Services Commission shall focus on areas of the state where the number of individuals needing child care exceeds the number of available openings with child care providers in the area.

(b) The Health and Human Services Commission shall educate families regarding:

(1) the full range of child care options available in the state;

(2) child care subsidy programs and the eligibility requirements for those programs; and

(3) the application process and eligibility requirements for child care providers, including waitlist protocols, locations, schedules, costs, curricula, languages, class sizes, safety guidelines, and supports to best meet their needs.

(c) The Health and Human Services Commission shall study:

(1) the effects of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) on child-care facility operating costs; and

1           (2) the impact of child-care facility closures,  
2 reductions in days or hours of operation, reductions in number of  
3 children provided care, and fears about safety on individuals who  
4 rely on the child-care facilities to allow the individuals to work.

5           (d) The Health and Human Services Commission shall:

6           (1) review sustainable financing options available  
7 for safe, quality child care, including community development block  
8 grant disaster recovery money authorized by federal law and federal  
9 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant funds;

10           (2) develop ways to increase child care resources and  
11 facilities, especially in marginalized and underserved  
12 communities;

13           (3) address the unequal access to child care among  
14 ethnic groups;

15           (4) develop incentives for child care providers who  
16 serve families of color, non-English speakers, and regions with an  
17 insufficient supply of child care options, including priority in  
18 awarding federal or state stimulus grants or technical assistance;

19           (5) expand support for child care workers and early  
20 childhood educators who serve marginalized and underserved  
21 communities;

22           (6) consider child care options for parents working  
23 nontraditional hours;

24           (7) create a directory of all licensed, registered,  
25 and listed child care providers and make the directory available to  
26 the public:

27           (A) on the commission's Internet website; and

1 (B) in a printed format;

2 (8) determine effective methods for disseminating  
3 information about child care resources, including through  
4 libraries, home visiting programs, health clinics, and  
5 community-based organizations;

6 (9) collect data and conduct research on the barriers  
7 to enrollment in child care programs and the impact the barriers  
8 have on the ability of families to obtain child care;

9 (10) develop ways to ensure the child care workforce,  
10 including child care providers and early childhood educators,  
11 receive fair and competitive compensation and benefits including  
12 health insurance;

13 (11) consider incentivizing ongoing quality  
14 improvements and updated trainings for child care providers;

15 (12) expand child care subsidy programs, including  
16 income eligibility for subsidies and tax credits; and

17 (13) improve the coordination between child care  
18 resource and referral agencies and local child care providers.

19 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.